

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

FEBRUARY 3, 1879.

Mr. HARRIS, from the Select Committee to investigate and report the best means of preventing the introduction and spread of Epidemic Diseases, reported the following bill; which was read the first and second times by unanimous consent and recommitted to the same committee.

**A BILL**

To prevent the introduction of contagious or infectious diseases into the United States, and to establish a Bureau of Public Health.

1       *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2       *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*  
3       That there shall be established in the Treasury Department a  
4       Bureau of Health, which shall consist of one chief executive  
5       officer, to be called the Director-General of Health, to be  
6       appointed by the President, by and with the advice and  
7       consent of the Senate, who shall receive a salary of four  
8       thousand five hundred dollars per annum, and a Board of  
9       Health, to consist of seven members, to be appointed in like  
10      manner, whose compensation shall be ten dollars per diem and  
11      reasonable expenses incurred during the time when actually  
12      engaged in the performance of their duties under this act.  
13      The Surgeon-General of the Army and the Surgeon-General

14 of the Navy shall be ex officio additional members of said  
15 board, but without additional pay. Said board shall meet in  
16 Washington or elsewhere within thirty days after the passage  
17 of this act, and from time to time upon notice from the Di-  
18 rector-General of Health, or upon its own adjournments, and  
19 shall frame all rules and regulations authorized or required by  
20 this act, and shall make, or cause to be made, by members of  
21 their own body, such special examinations and investigations,  
22 at any place or places within the United States, as they may  
23 order, to aid in the execution of this act and the promotion of  
24 its objects, subject to the approval of the Secretary of the  
25 Treasury. The Director-General of Health shall be ex officio  
26 a member and president of said Board of Health. All rules  
27 and regulations under this act, framed by said Board of Health,  
28 shall be uniform and subject to the approval of the President,  
29 and shall then be enforced by the Director-General of Health.

1       SEC. 2. That there shall be appointed by the Secretary  
2 of the Treasury, in said Bureau of Health, in addition to the  
3 clerks and assistants necessary to perform duties in connec-  
4 tion with the Marine Hospital Service, and whose salaries are  
5 payable out of the Marine Hospital fund, one chief clerk, at a  
6 salary of two thousand dollars, and such other clerks, in num-  
7 ber and grade as may be found necessary, not to exceed three.

1       SEC. 3. That the Bureau of Health shall be charged  
2 with the supervision of all matters connected with



3 the Marine Hospital Service; and the Director-General  
4 of Health shall perform all the duties and exercise all  
5 the powers now devolving upon the Supervising Surgeon  
6 General of the Marine Hospital Service, which office is hereby  
7 abolished, and all the records, papers, and other matters be-  
8 longing thereto transferred to the Bureau of Health; and said  
9 bureau is charged with the execution of the provisions of this  
10 and all other acts and measures to prevent the introduction  
11 of contagious or infectious diseases into the United States, and  
12 the enforcement of all quarantine regulations, lawfully estab-  
13 lished, in respect to all vessels and vehicles engaged in com-  
14 merce with foreign nations and among the States, whether by  
15 land or water. The Bureau of Health shall also be charged  
16 with the execution of all laws and orders, rules and  
17 regulations, made in pursuance thereof, for the improve-  
18 ment of the sanitary condition of the District of Columbia.  
19 The Bureau of Health shall also be charged with the  
20 duty of obtaining information of the sanitary condition  
21 of foreign ports and places from which contagious or  
22 infectious diseases are or may be imported into the United  
23 States; and to this end the consular officers of the United  
24 States, at all ports and places, who may be required to do  
25 so, by notice from the Secretary of the Treasury, shall  
26 make to the Director-General of Health weekly reports of  
27 the sanitary condition of the ports and places at which they are

28 respectively stationed, according to such forms as he may pre-  
29 scribe; and the Bureau of Health shall also obtain, through  
30 the medical officers of the Marine Hospital Service, collectors  
31 of customs, and such other sources as are accessible, including  
32 State and municipal health officers and authorities throughout  
33 the United States, weekly reports of the sanitary condition of  
34 ports and places within the United States; and the Director-  
35 General of Health shall prepare and transmit to the medi-  
36 cal officers of the Marine Hospital Service, to collectors of  
37 customs, and to State and municipal health officers and  
38 authorities, weekly abstracts of the consular sanitary reports,  
39 and other pertinent information received by him; and said  
40 Bureau of Health shall also, as far as it may be able, by  
41 means of the voluntary co-operation of State and municipal  
42 authorities, of public associations and private persons, procure  
43 information relating to the climatic and other conditions  
44 affecting the public health; and the Director-General of  
45 Health shall make an annual report to the Secretary of the  
46 Treasury of the operations of the Bureau of Health, for trans-  
47 mission to Congress, with such recommendations as he may  
48 deem important to the public interests.

1        SEC. 4. That it shall be unlawful for any vessel engaged  
2 in the transportation of goods or persons from any foreign  
3 country to and into the United States to enter any port of  
4 the United States except in accordance with the provisions of



5 this act, and all rules and regulations made in pursuance  
6 thereof and applicable thereto; and any such vessel which  
7 shall enter or attempt to enter a port of the United States in  
8 violation thereof shall forfeit to the United States a sum, to  
9 be awarded in the discretion of the court, not exceeding five  
10 thousand dollars, which shall be a lien upon said vessel to be  
11 recovered by proceedings in admiralty in the proper district  
12 court of the United States.

1       SEC. 5. All such vessels shall be required to obtain from  
2 the consul, vice-consul, or other consular officer of the United  
3 States at the port of departure, a certificate, in duplicate, set-  
4 ting forth that said vessel has in all respects complied with  
5 the rules and regulations in such cases prescribed, and herein  
6 authorized, for the disinfection of the said vessel, its cargo,  
7 passengers, and crew; and said consular officer is required,  
8 before granting such certificate, to be satisfied that the mat-  
9 ters and things therein stated are true, and for his services  
10 in that behalf shall be entitled to demand and receive such  
11 fees as shall by lawful regulation be allowed, to be accounted  
12 for as is required in other cases.

13       And all vessels sailing from the port of Havana, in the  
14 island of Cuba, and bound for any port in the United States,  
15 shall be required to obtain from a medical officer, serving in  
16 the office of the consul of the United States at that port, to  
17 be appointed by the President for that purpose, and who

18 shall receive a salary of three thousand five hundred dollars  
19 per annum, his certificate, setting forth that he has personally  
20 inspected said vessel, her cargo, crew, and passengers; that  
21 the rules and regulations prescribed by the Bureau of Health  
22 in respect thereto have been fully complied with; and that, in  
23 his opinion, the said vessel may be allowed to enter a port of  
24 the United States and land its cargo and passengers, without  
25 danger to the health thereof on account of any infectious dis-  
26 ease; and any vessel sailing from said port without such cer-  
27 tificate of said medical officer, entering any port of the United  
28 States, shall forfeit to the United States the sum of five hun-  
29 dred dollars, which shall be a lien on the same, to be recov-  
30 ered by proceedings in admiralty in the proper district court  
31 of the United States.

1        SEC. 6. The Director-General of Health shall, from  
2 time to time, issue to the consular officers of the United  
3 States, and to the medical officer serving at the port of Ha-  
4 vana, and otherwise make publicly known, in such manner  
5 as shall be therein prescribed, the rules and regulations framed  
6 by the Board of Health and approved by the President, to be  
7 used and complied with by vessels in foreign ports, for disin-  
8 fecting such vessels, their cargoes, passengers, and crew, be-  
9 fore their departure for any port in the United States, and in  
10 the course of the voyage; and also such other rules and regu-  
11 lations which shall be observed in the inspection of the same,



12 on the arrival thereof at any quarantine station at the port  
13 of destination, and for the disinfection and isolation of the  
14 same, and the treatment of cargo and persons on board, so as  
15 to prevent the spread of cholera, yellow fever, or other con-  
16 tagious or infectious disease; and it shall not be lawful for  
17 any vessel to enter said port, to discharge its cargo, or land  
18 its passengers, except upon a permit from the health-officer  
19 at such quarantine station, certifying that said rules and  
20 regulations have in all respects been observed and com-  
21 plied with, as well on his part as on the part of the said  
22 vessel and its master, in respect to the same, and to its cargo,  
23 passengers, and crew; and the master of every such vessel  
24 shall produce and deliver to the collector of customs at said  
25 port of entry, together with the other papers of the vessel,  
26 the said certificates required to be obtained at the port of  
27 departure, and the permit and certificate herein required to  
28 be obtained from the health-officer at the port of entry. In  
29 case the health-officer at any such port appointed by local  
30 authority shall refuse to adopt and observe the rules and reg-  
31 ulations prescribed by the Bureau of Health for the inspection,  
32 disinfection, and treatment of vessels, their cargoes, passen-  
33 gers, and crews, or, in the opinion of the Board of Health,  
34 shall neglect or fail so to do, it shall be the duty of the Sec-  
35 retary of the Treasury to appoint a health-officer of the United  
36 States for said port, who shall perform the duties thereof, as

37 prescribed by said Bureau of Health, according to the rules  
38 and regulations as prescribed by the Board of Health, as pro-  
39 vided by the first section of this act; and to provide for the  
40 salary of such health-officer and the necessary expenses of  
41 his office, the collector of customs at said port shall demand  
42 and collect from every such vessel a fee of six dollars and  
43 fifty cents; but it shall be the duty of the medical officers of  
44 the Marine Hospital Service and of customs-officers to aid in  
45 the enforcement of the rules and regulations authorized by  
46 this act, without additional compensation, except for actual  
47 and necessary traveling expenses incurred in the performance  
48 of such duties.

1        SEC. 7. That rules and regulations framed and approved  
2 as hereinbefore authorized shall be promulgated, so that when  
3 cholera, yellow fever, or other similar contagious or infectious  
4 disease shall be ascertained by the Director-General of Health  
5 to exist in any port or place within any one of the United  
6 States, in such form as threatens its spread, as to prevent,  
7 as far as practicable, the communication of the same to other  
8 ports and places within other States, by means of vessels and  
9 vehicles engaged in the transportation of goods or passengers  
10 between two or more States, whether by land or water; and  
11 in that case, the Director-General of Health shall select suit-  
12 able localities for establishing quarantine stations on the rivers  
13 and other lines of inter-State commerce and travel by railroads,



14 and may cause to be erected necessary temporary buildings  
15 for the disinfection of passengers, baggage, cargoes, vessels,  
16 and vehicles, and may enforce such rules and regulations  
17 relating thereto as may have been prescribed therefor.

1       SEC. 8. That it shall be the duty of the Director-Gen-  
2 eral of Health and of the Board of Health, so far as they law-  
3 fully may, in the execution of their powers conferred upon  
4 them by law, to correspond and co-operate with similar local  
5 officers, boards, and authorities acting under laws of the  
6 States in sanitary measures, to prevent the introduction and  
7 spread of contagious and infectious diseases from foreign  
8 countries into the United States, and from one State into any  
9 other State, by means of commercial intercourse, or upon  
10 and along the lines of inter-State trade and travel ; and to that  
11 end it shall be lawful for said Board of Health and Director-  
12 General of Health to confer upon any such local officer or  
13 board within or near the locality where his or its authority is  
14 exercised, power also to enforce the provisions of this act and  
15 any rules and regulations made in pursuance thereof.

1       SEC. 9. That a commission is hereby constituted, to  
2 consist of three persons, one of whom shall be a medical  
3 expert, one a microscopist, and one a sanitary engineer, em-  
4 inent for scientific attainments, to be appointed by the Pres-  
5 ident, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, who

6 shall visit the port of Havana and there investigate the  
7 nature and history of yellow fever and the conditions of its  
8 origin and spread at that place and vicinity. The members  
9 of said commission shall be paid for their services at the rate  
10 of ten dollars per diem while actually engaged in the per-  
11 formance of the same, and their actual reasonable expenses,  
12 and shall report to Congress at its next session their proceed-  
13 ings and recommendations. And said commission shall be  
14 authorized to employ one clerk and one stenographer, at  
15 rates of compensation to be fixed by the Secretary of the  
16 Treasury. And to pay the expenses attending the execution  
17 of this section of this act, there is hereby appropriated the  
18 sum of twenty thousand dollars, out of any money in the  
19 Treasury not otherwise appropriated; and that the President  
20 be requested to invite the concurrence and co-operation of the  
21 Spanish Government in the examinations and experiments of  
22 this commission in furtherance of international commerce and  
23 the sanitary interests of mankind.





45TH CONGRESS, {  
3D Session. } S. 1752.

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